

A1 10. (Amended) The electrical connector according to claim 9, wherein said formed terminal portion is bent after insertion into said receptacle [had been subjected to post-assembly bending for terminal retention].

Claim 23, line 3, before "member" delete "barrier" and insert -- retention --.

A2 24. (Amended) The electrical connector according to claim 22, wherein said formed terminal portion is bent after insertion into said receptacle [had been subjected to post-assembly bending].

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed on September 20, 2000, the Examiner requested affirmation of the provisional election made by applicant on September 13, 2000, objected to the drawings as not including Figures 5-8 referred to in the application, objected to a minor informality in the specification, rejected claims 3, 10 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejected claims 1-4, 6, 11, 13-20, 22, 23, 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,098,315 ("Scowen") in view of United States Patent No. 5,496,193 ("Kameyama"), rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scowen and Kameyama and further in view of United States Patent No. 5,820,389 ("Hashiguchi"), rejected claims 7, 8 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scowen and Kameyama and further in view of United States Patent No. 5,713,744 ("Laub") and rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scowen and Kameyama and further in view of United States Patent No. 5,647,750 ("Tran et al."). The Examiner objected to claims 21 and 27 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By the present amendment, claims 3, 10, 23 and 24 have been amended. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested. Claims 1-27 are pending in this application.

In response to the restriction requirement, applicant affirms the provisional election of September 13, 2000 to prosecute Group I of claims 1-27 drawn to an electrical connector having a supportive barrier, classified in class 439, sub-class 587, with traverse.

With respect to the drawings, Figures 5-8, which inadvertently were not sent to the Patent Office when the application was originally filed, are being submitted herewith. No new matter is being introduced with these drawings. Approval of Figures 5-8 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to the specification due to a minor informality. Applicant has corrected the informality, and withdrawal of the objection to the specification is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected claims 3, 10 and 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Specifically, regarding claim 3, the Examiner indicated that there was insufficient antecedent basis for the phrase "said barrier member." With respect to claims 10 and 24, the Examiner indicated that those claims are incomplete for omitting essential steps. Specifically, the Examiner stated that the omitted steps are the general assembly of the structure before a "post-assembly bending" for terminal retention. Applicant has amended claim 3, 10 and 24 to cure the Examiner's 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejections, and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph rejection of claims 3, 10 and 24 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-4, 6, 11, 13-20, 22, 23, 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scowen in view of Kameyama. Applicant disagrees with the Examiner's rejection.

Independent claim 1 recites a connector having, *inter alia*, at least one retention member engaging at least one of the contacts. The Examiner concedes that Scowen fails to disclose a retention member that engages the contact, but contends that Kameyama teaches such structure. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Kameyama discloses, *inter alia*, a rear holder 33 mounted at a rear portion of the terminal receiving chamber 5, and the wire 9 extends through and is retained by this rear holder 33, and the rear holder 33 prevents the terminal 7 from being disengaged from the terminal receiving chamber. (Kameyama, col. 4, lines 1-6.) Thus, contrary to the Examiner's contention,

Kameyama does not disclose, teach or suggest a retention member engaging the contact. Rather, the terminal 7 is retained by the rear holder 33 which engages the wire 9, not the terminal 7. As such, applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scowen in view of Kameyama.

As independent claim 22 recites a retention member engaging at least one of the contacts as recited in independent claim 1, the above arguments against obviousness of claim 1 are equally applicable to the non-obviousness of claim 22. Applicant therefore requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of independent claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scowen in view of Kameyama. Since claims 2-4, 6, 11, 13-20, 23, 25 and 26 are ultimately dependent on either independent claim 1 or 22, claims 2-4, 6, 11, 13-20, 23, 25 and 26 are likewise patentably distinct from the combination of Scowen and Kameyama for at least the same reason that independent claims 1 and 22 are patentably distinct over the Scowen Kameyama combination. Thus, applicant requests that the Examiner also withdraw the rejection of claims 2-4, 6, 11, 13-20, 23, 25 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Scowen and Kameyama.

The Examiner rejected claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scowen and Kameyama and further in view of Hashiguchi. As claim 5 is ultimately dependent on independent claim 1, claim 5 is patentable over the Scowen, Kameyama and Hashiguchi combination for at least the same reason that independent claim 1 is patentable over the Scowen and Kameyama combination because, as with Scowen and Kameyama, Hashiguchi fails to disclose, teach or suggest a retention member that engages the contact. Accordingly, applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Scowen, Kameyama and Hashiguchi.

The Examiner rejected claims 7, 8 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scowen and Kameyama and further in view of Laub. As claims 7, 8 and 12 are dependent on independent claim 1, claims 7, 8 and 12 are patentable over the Scowen, Kameyama and Laub combination for at least the same reason that independent claim 1 is patentable over the Scowen and Kameyama combination because, as with Scowen and Kameyama, Laub fails to disclose,

teach or suggest a retention member that engages the contact. Accordingly, applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 7, 8 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Scowen, Kameyama and Laub.

The Examiner rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Scowen and Kameyama and further in view of Tran et al. As claim 9 is dependent on independent claim 1, claim 9 is patentable over the Scowen, Kameyama and Tran et al. combination for at least the same reason that independent claim 1 is patentable over the Scowen and Kameyama combination because, as with Scowen and Kameyama, Tran et al. fails to disclose, teach or suggest a retention member that engages the contact. Accordingly, applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Scowen, Kameyama and Tran et al.

The Examiner also made the following prior art of record, but did not rely upon it: United States Patent No. 6,106,305 ("Kozel et al."), United States Patent No. 5,967,800 ("Bishop"), United States Patent No. 5,199,889 ("McDevitt Jr."), United States Patent No. 5,927,725 ("Tabata et al.") and United States Patent No. 4,621,883 ("Noguchi"). These references, whether taken alone or in combination, do not disclose, teach or suggest the subject matter claimed by the applicant.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider the rejections in view of the amended claims and in light of the above comments, and allowance of all claims is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conversation would facilitate prosecution of the present application, the Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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